

# Pet Rocks: A Complete Guide

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### The History

One day, some time ago, a man named Gary Dahl struggles to make ends meet. His ideas are fueled by inebriation—growing sand, making a coffee can jump around—but one drunken joke turns into his legacy: he puts a rock in a box, pokes some holes in it, and becomes a millionaire.

He grows into a man of pride and regret—he believes the pet rock is an ingenious invention that no other can match, but the world does not agree. Suggestions of pet sticks are made to taunt him; his fame is far from perfect in its glory. The name of his company, 'Rock Bottom Productions', was never a pun, but a symbol of his mental state cracking under the pressure of his success. It was also a pun. At the end of it all, one can only hope that his leftover rocks found a good home in repaving his driveway, as he had planned before his death in 2015.

### A Make-Your-Own Tutorial

#### Materials Required:

- Scrubby brush (optional but recommended)
- Superglue (Gorilla Glue is *very* annoying to use repetitively, so I've had the easiest time with Loctite Ultra Gel Control)
- Googly eyes (I prefer 6 mm ones)
- Rocks, of course

#### Step 1: Collect Rocks

Anywhere there are rocks, go to the rocks, and pick some out that meet the following criteria.

Avoid rocks:

- Without a good side for a face when resting on a flat surface—the face needs a spot for two eyes and it shouldn't be angled down too much, that way, when it's sitting on a table, the eyes are looking up or forward.
- That are too big (I'd go with lemon-sized or smaller, unless you want to make bigger ones, in which case you'll probably need larger googly eyes than the 6mm previously recommended)
- That have a bumpy surface (you'll need a decently smooth surface to glue on the googly eyes—definitely use superglue, even if your googly eyes are self-adhesive, for this reason).

### **Step 2: Clean Rocks**

Make sure you clean your rocks when you get home. I usually put a rock haul in a tub of water with gentle laundry detergent and scrub them, because there's too many to just clean under a running sink, but you really don't need soap as long as you're getting the mud out of the crevices. You'll just want to make sure you're gluing the eyes onto the rock's surface, and not onto dirt caked *on* the rock, so they don't fall off later.

### **Step 3: Glue Rocks**

Lay out your eyes and rocks. Decide which side you want the face to be—if the rock is wider and larger, put the eyes further apart, and if it's smaller, put them closer together. Dot glue on the rock where you want the eyes to be and press them on, holding them down firmly, basically until they don't fall off with the lifting of your fingers—around 15 seconds is usually enough for superglue to bond itself, but I just hold it down until I get bored, which is likely also 15 seconds. Be careful with them for a good few hours to make sure the glue cures. Draw a smile if you wish.

### **Step 4: Gift Rocks**

Gary Dahl made one mistake: marketing the pet rock. He made two mistakes, actually, the second being *not giving it eyes*. Those little googly eyes turn a rock from the sidewalk into an adorable pet that people will get attached to after just one look, and that's no exaggeration. The true purpose of pet rocks is to bring people joy, like a puppy that doesn't urinate on your bed when it's excited—so keep your favorite and give the rest to the people you love.

## **The Legacy**

Gary Dahl and I are men built of the same concept but different morals; he made millions of dollars, and I made some friends smile. Glueing eyes on rocks is a relaxing activity that keeps me sane. Putting them in my aquarium doesn't work (googly eyes are terrifying underwater), but putting them *next* to my aquarium does, and it makes my betta fish, Clarence, who has a bad habit of eating all of his tankmates, feel less lonely. I have filled my boyfriend's house with googly-eyed rocks, in every crevice I could reach, so that years from now he will still be finding them. That boy will never forget me, haunted by googly-eyed rocks that remind him of the high school relationship he had once, with the most perfect guy he'll have ever met. (Me.)

So glue some eyes on rocks, give them to your friends as an adorable gift, and maybe fill someone's closet with them if you want to leave a lasting impression. That is the legacy and the

true spirit of the pet rock: love. Love your rock. Give your friends rocks to love. Life might be short, but pet rocks are forever.

**Sources:**

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